

Developments That Matter

Small Businesses Step Up to the Coronavirus Challenge

Small businesses are the backbone of our communities and our economy. Employing nearly half the American workforce, they keep our neighborhoods running and make them feel like home. The impacts of the coronavirus pandemic have wrought unprecedented financial uncertainty, yet they are still finding ways to give back to their communities, according to the Chamber's latest [Small Business Coronavirus Impact Poll](#).

Two-in-three small businesses are continuing contributions to those in need in the midst of the pandemic. This includes nearly one-third (31%) who have donated to a food bank or COVID-19 response fund, one in five (22%) who report paying their employees even if their business has shortened hours or is closed, and another one in five (22%) who have loaned money to a friend or family member. Nineteen percent say they have produced or donated personal protective equipment.

Our Foundation's [Corporate Aid Tracker](#) brings small business generosity to life. Take [Kaas Tailored](#), a furniture manufacturer in Mukilteo, WA, that shifted from building furniture for major airplane manufacturers to making personal protective equipment, producing more than 100,000 surgical masks and 30,000 face shields with a team of 200 employees. [Eight Oaks Farm](#), a family-run distillery in New Tripoli, PA, halted its production of whiskey, rum, and other spirits, and switched to making hand sanitizer for nonprofits and frontline workers. Another family-owned business, Minuteman Press, which works with local franchisees across the nation to provide print, design, and marketing services, launched the [Bounce Back USA](#) initiative, offering free advertising and COVID-19 awareness and prevention posters to support local businesses in need.

We're seeing incredible acts of kindness from local chambers as well. The Tucson Metro Chamber and Tucson LGBT Chamber of Commerce have been working with local hotels to [provide respite housing](#) for frontline healthcare workers and recovering COVID-19 patients.

Every hour of every day, small business owners and small chambers across the country are being forced to make difficult decisions due to the significant revenue disruptions caused by the coronavirus. Yet, giving back to their communities is not one of them. Through their resilience, compassion, and ingenuity, small businesses continue to strengthen our communities and serve as a powerful beacon of hope in these trying times.

–Carolyn Cawley, President, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation and Senior Vice President, U.S. Chamber of Commerce